

REMARKS

By this amendment, claims 18, 26, 30 and 33 have been amended to further define the invention wherein the cavities of the first plate are dissimilar in shape from the cavities of the second plate and the projections on the first plate are discrete and spaced from one another. Support for these amendments can be found, for example, in the specification at page 5 lines 30-32, page 13 lines 24-30, and in the drawing figures. Claim 19 has been canceled, and claim 20 has been amended to depend from claim 18 rather than claim 19. Claims 24, 25 and 28 have been amended to correct formal errors. New claim 37 finds support, for example, in the specification at page 22 lines 22-27, page 10 lines 23-28, and in the drawing figures. No new matter has been introduced by these amendments.

In the action, the Examiner has identified 4 distinct, claimed inventions:

Group I, claims 18-25, drawn to a separator;

Group II, claims 26-29, drawn to a method of manufacturing a separator;

Group III, claims 30-32, drawn to an electrochemical system; and

Group IV, claims 33-36, drawn to a process of using a separator.

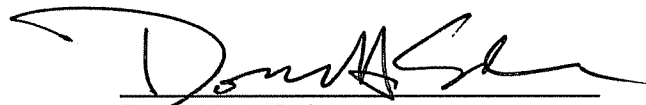
The Examiner asserts that the inventions listed as Groups I, II, III, and IV do not relate to a single general inventive concept under PCT Rule 13.1 because, under PCT Rule 13.2, they lack the same or corresponding special technical features for the following reasons: Groups I, II, III, and IV lack a unity of invention because their common feature does not provide a contribution over prior art, namely the prior art Rock published US application 2003/0124405.

Applicant hereby elects, with traverse, "Invention I," claims 18-25. The amended claims all have the technical features that define a contribution over the art, as Rock clearly fails to suggest having the cavities of the first plate are dissimilar in shape from the cavities of the second plate and the projections on the first plate are discrete and spaced from one another. Thus, all of the pending claims should be examined in this application in accordance with PCT Rules 13.1 and 13.2.

Applicant has made the above election of invention to comply with PCT Rule 13.1 for the sole purpose of prosecution on the merits. Applicant's election should not be construed in any way to limit the scope or spirit of any of the embodiments of the present invention disclosed in the application.

Further prosecution of the present application is courteously solicited.

Respectfully submitted,



Donald A. Schurr
Registration No. 34,247

ATTORNEYS

Customer Number 0068459
MARSHALL & MELHORN, LLC
Four SeaGate - 8th Floor
Toledo, Ohio 43604

Phone: (419) 249-7145
Fax: (419) 249-7151